

Purity Covenant

(Adapted from Preparing for Marriage by Dennis Rainey)

From the world's viewpoint, maintaining sexual purity before marriage seems like cruel and unusual punishment. Many people consider it strange if a couple does not sleep together before they are married. "After all," they say, "shouldn't they find out whether they are sexually compatible?"

God's Word regarding sex cuts right across the grain of our culture. The culture portrays sexual intimacy between two unmarried people as something as casual and innocuous as holding hands, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Read the following verses and seek to understand God's perspective of sex. Remember: Sex is God's idea.

"You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14)

"So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

"Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him." (Ephesians 1:4)

"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1:14-16)

"For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love." (2 Peter 1:5-7)

"For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Ephesians 5:5)

"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous." (Hebrews 13:4)

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Philippians 4:8)

"For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil." (Romans 16:19)

It is easy to know another person sexually, especially in our present culture. But a marriage relationship requires much, much more than physical intimacy. There first needs to be spiritual and emotional intimacy to build trust, commitment and communication. Marriage is a lifelong covenant to love and care and nourish.

God had our best in mind when He gave us strong directives about sexual purity before marriage. There are many benefits to staying pure before marriage. By waiting until marriage:

- . You please God.
- . You build trust and trust is necessary for intimacy.
- . You develop the godly qualities of patience and self-control.
- . You affirm that you care more for the other person than yourself.
- . You protect yourself from feelings of guilt and shame.
- . You provide yourself with an example to give your children.
- . You are protected from emotional, mental and physical trauma should you break off your relationship.
- . You develop healthy communication habits and skills.
- . You avoid the possibility of an unwanted pregnancy.
- . You maintain a clear conscience before God and man.
- . You increase the anticipation and enjoyment of your wedding night.
- . You experience the blessing of obedience.
- . You discover more about each other than just the physical.
- . You maintain a witness to a lost world.
- . You keep from bringing reproach on the name of Christ.

Make a check mark beside the five benefits that strike a chord in your heart. Share these benefits and why you chose them.

Moral Excellence

Sexual purity is especially difficult during the engagement period. You have declared your commitment and you naturally want to consummate the relationship. You may even feel married at points. Yet what better time to establish your relationship and build trust in one another by obeying God than on this key point.

Sexual purity means much more than not having sexual intercourse before marriage. Many couples avoid intercourse but are still sexually intimate. Look again at the verses quoted previously. Scripture defines sexual purity as being morally excellent. And moral excellence means being holy. It means avoiding the appearance of evil. It means purity of thought as well as purity of deed. It means protecting one another's innocence from being stained by evil.

The Purity Covenant

BIBLICAL STANDARD

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

In obedience to God's command, we promise to protect your sexual purity from this day until our honeymoon.

BIBLICAL STANDARD

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Because I respect and honor you, I commit to building up the inner person of your heart.

BIBLICAL STANDARD

Acts 24:16

So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.

I pledge to show my love for you in ways that allow both of us to maintain a clear conscience before God and each other.

This is my promise of purity.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Witnessed/affirmed by: _____

Date: _____